

RETIREMENT OF THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN
AUSTIN GRAHAM BAGNALL

Mr Bagnall's retirement took effect from 15 May 1973. He had taken up his duties in March 1966, but as he said in a farewell speech, his relationship with the Library could be compared with a life-long love affair, and he hoped for various minor illicit contacts to continue even now after the affair was at an end.

Graham Bagnall first joined the Turnbull staff in 1937, the year in which he gained his M.A. from Victoria University College, with first class honours in Philosophy, and two years later became Assistant Chief Librarian. From 1941 to 1945 he served in the Navy Office and was then seconded for a short time to the War Histories branch of the Department of Internal Affairs until, in 1946, he became the first librarian of the newly created National Library Centre of the old National Library Service, now incorporated in the National Library. It is of the next twenty years there that Mr G. T. Alley, first National Librarian, treats in a tribute from which the following extracts are taken.

'With skill, courage and perseverance he made, or arranged to have made by the appropriate authorities, plans for the beginning or further development of vital national bibliographical projects. The National Bibliography begins more or less formally in 1948, after a discussion with the Library Resources Committee of the New Zealand Library Association. The *Union List of Serials* and the *Index to New Zealand Periodicals*, both initiated on a part-time basis through professional zeal in the New Zealand Library Association, found their permanent home in the Centre soon after his appointment. His acceptance of the quite demanding job of Secretary of the Book Resources (later, Library Resources) Committee of the NZLA made possible a long period of intense development of much needed bibliographical and co-operative projects.

'Always a realist, never, of course, a mere joiner of committees, Mr. Bagnall has made a distinctive contribution to the work of national bodies, including the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO. . . .

'Among the great libraries whose principals, past or present, came here were Harvard University, the British Museum, the Library of Congress. One of Mr. Bagnall's many, but lesser known, contributions to library development was to act as interpreter, guide and friend to some of these eminent people, who included Mr. and Mrs. K. D. Metcalf, Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Osborn, Sir Frank and Lady Francis, and Mr. L. Quincy Mumford. . . .